

**MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT: Chinese Capability for Delivery of Nuclear Weapons**

1. At the present time the Chinese have only a very limited capability for the delivery of nuclear weapons.

2. This capability is limited to the few aircraft types they have available. Their primary capability at present rests upon about 200 IL-28 (BEAGLE) jet light bombers which are capable of nuclear weapons delivery up to about 500 to 600 nautical miles from the take-off point. However, crude nuclear weapons of the immediate post World War II type would be too large for an IL-28 to carry. The Chinese have about 10 operational B-29 type TU-4's which they received from the USSR back in the mid 50's which could carry a fairly crude weapon of the Hiroshima type (13 KT's) up to 1600-1800 nautical miles, but we do not know the Chinese capability for a blast/weight/size ratio. The two TU-16 (BADGER's) the Chinese are known to have received from the USSR back in 1958 are not believed to be operational, i.e., capable of flying a combat mission, although they may be flyable.

3. The Peiping regime has been working very hard to acquire a missile capability along with its nuclear capability. However, since the Soviets took their leave in mid-1960, Peiping has had a tough road to hoe. Still they have recently picked up in the missile field. Since 1961 they have had four periods of surface-to-surface missile test activity. Test activity was first detected in December 1961, again in March 1962—this shot was an apparent failure. In October-November 1962 another period of test activity was noted and a more extensive period of probable testing was noted in June and July of this year. We believe they are working with a missile on the order of a Soviet SS-4 (1000 nautical miles). This missile can be fired to lesser distances as well.

4. If they work hard and keep things moving they may be able to come up with a satisfactory prototype in 1966. However, they will still be confronted with fabricating sufficient numbers for a deployed system. This is in question. When the Soviets withdrew, Chinese jet aircraft production ceased. So far as is known, they have not yet been able to produce jets on their own. We assume that they have diverted most of their major technical skill to the advanced weapons program. Still, there are problems which must be overcome and we do not believe them capable at the present time of being able to fabricate a large number of surface-to-surface missiles on the order of an MGM. The year 1969 might be a reasonable time to expect the appearance of some tactically deployed MGM's with nuclear warheads. Even this will constitute a major effort considering the limitations of their industrial technology. Still the dogged determination of the Peiping regime must not be underestimated. They have a will, and they will probably find a way just as they have with the bomb.

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